# The Last Of the Giants

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By GORDON A. CRAIG

During his long and distinguished career as a newspaperman, C. L. Sulzberger has always believed that men are more important in history than things, and, in looking for answers to the complicated problems of foreign affairs that have plagued our times, he has always sought out the principal actors in the world drama. What they have told him—and they have generally talked with a freedom that is more a tribute to his ability to win their confidence and his skill as an interviewer than to their being, as he modestly suggests, "dominated by some conversational afflatus"—he has methodically copied down in notebooks that were originally designed not for publication but as sources of information for his reports to The New York Times and, after 1954, for his column "Foreign Affairs." As time passed, items in these books that once seemed confidential lost that character, and this removed the principal reason for keeping the diary private. Mr. Sulzberger decided therefore to publish it in three volumes, and when the first of them appeared last year—"A Long Row of Candles," covering the years from 1934 to 1954—it was immediately recognized as an important contribution to the history of the recent past.

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There is no reason to believe that the reaction to this sequel will be different. Indeed, to many readers, this second volume will have even greater interest, for the years it treats, 1954 to 1963, were ones of almost unrelieved tension, and the memory of the ugly crises that filled them is still green. It was a period that began with discouragement for the West, when the defeat of the European Defense Community in 1954 made many Americans feel, with John Foster Dulles, that an agonizing reappraisal of our European commitments might be advisable.

Thereafter, in remorseless succession, came the Suez crisis, which for a time threatened to destroy NATO, the launching of the *Sputniki*, which persuaded many people in the democracies that the Russians were winning the technological and military race, and the hardening of the Soviet diplomatic line, which seemed to indicate that the Russians believed that too. Khrushchev's Berlin ultimatum in November, 1958, the blusters and menaces that followed the U-2 incident and aborted the 1960 summit conference, and the building of the Berlin wall in August, 1961, darkened the international skies further and strengthened the conviction of many people in high places that the Soviets could be stopped only by a war in which there would be no victors. It was not until the Cuban crisis of 1962 that these fears were dispelled, and then only by a demonstration of firmness on the part of the United States Government that seemed to surprise some of our friends as much as it did the Russians.

The doubts and fears engendered by these events find dramatic reflection in Mr. Sulzberger's diary. He tells us of the pessimism of David Bruce (described in "A Long Row of Candles" as one of "the finest public servants the United States has produced since the glowing eighteenth century") after the French had shot down E.D.C. and his somber reflections on all the energy expended without result in the cause of European integration. He shows us John Foster Dulles speaking in Pollyanna terms about the strength of NATO at a time when the evidence showed that our allies were refusing to meet their strength quotas, and adds, "Listening to Dulles talk this way is terrifying." He reports that Dean Acheson, at the height of the Suez affair, described Dulles and his British opposite number, Selwyn Lloyd, as "a couple of slick lawyers who are trying to outsmart each other," and tells how Randolph Churchill and Julian Amery alternately flayed Anthony Eden and the United States Government for the subsequent debacle, bitterly accusing Washington of wishing to make a deal with Russia at England's expense.

In the wake of the Berlin ultimatum, he tells of a conversation with Gen. Lyman Lemnitzer, in which that officer, soon to be the United States Army Chief of Staff, speculated on the feasibility of a "semi-nuclear war" in the vicinity of Berlin; and somewhat later, in December, 1961, records how our Ambassador in Paris, General Gavin, said gloomily, "Berlin is absolutely lost, but everybody is afraid to say so. . . . It was lost when we let Russia get away with building the wall on August 13."

As Western discouragement and Soviet confidence mounted, Sulzberger found himself suddenly transformed from observer to participant in the game of high politics. On Aug. 26, 1961, while he was on holiday in Greece, he received an unexpected telegram from Moscow, asking him to get in